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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/814,638	03/22/2001	Harold Mattice	403450	6291

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EXAMINER

JONES, SCOTT E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3713

DATE MAILED: 01/28/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application N .

09/814,638

Applicant(s)

MATTICE ET AL.

Examiner

Scott E. Jones

Art Unit

3713

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 November 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 March 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. This office action is in response to the request for continued examination and amendment filed on November 3, 2003 and October 3, 2003, respectively, in which applicant amends claims 1, 13, 24, and 31 and responds to the claim rejections. Claims 1-36 are pending.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

2. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on October 3, 2003 has been entered.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description:

- In Figure 6, common terminal 23 (common line 13) is not shown as described in the specification.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

4. The drawings are objected to because:

Art Unit: 3713

- Page 6, line 5 of Paper No. 6, submitted on April 22, 2003, states, “COMMON terminal 23 connected to the COMMON line 14”. However, Figure 3 does not show COMMON terminal 23 connected to COMMON line 14 as described.

A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

5. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

- On page 1, line 4 of paragraph 3, “requires” should be changed to “require”.
- On page 4, line 2 of paragraph 2, “23” should be inserted between “terminal” and “connected”.

Correction is required.

Claim Objections

6. Claims 6 and 8 are objected to because of the following informalities:

- In claim 6, the preamble recites, “the gaming device of claim 5”, however, “a gaming system” is recited in the preamble of claim 5.
- In the last line of claim 13, “M-bit register” should be changed to “M-bit shift register” to make the claim language consistent throughout.

Correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

8. Claims 5-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

9. Claim 5 recites the limitation "node" in line 2. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. Furthermore, as claimed, at least two local controllers (nodes), a first and last, would be directly connected to the host controller. The amended language of claim 1 would preclude this from occurring.

Claims 6-11 inherit the deficiency of claim 5 by dependency.

10. Claim 8 recites the limitation "nodes" in line 3. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claims 9-11 inherit the deficiency of claim 8 by dependency.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

11. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

12. Claims 1-36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wells (U.S. Patent Application Publication U.S. 2002/0115487 A1).

Wells discloses a gaming device network comprising a method and apparatus for permitting communications with a gaming device(s). In one embodiment of the invention, the invention comprises a network including a host or gaming gateway and a communication

Art Unit: 3713

interface associated with each gaming device on the network. A communication link is provided between the gaming gateway and the gaming devices. The gaming gateway and communication interfaces are arranged to bi-directionally transmit and receive data over the communications link. In one embodiment, the communications link is an optical communications link.

Furthermore, the network comprises a host communication device capable of transmitting and receiving data, at least one gaming device, a communication interface associated with each gaming device, and a communication link provided between each one gaming device and the host communication device, the communications link comprising at least one optic fiber, the host communications device and each communications interface associated with a gaming device configured to bi-directionally communicate data over the communication link. In one embodiment, an optic fiber extends from the gaming gateway to a first gaming device. Another optic fiber extends from the first gaming device to the next gaming device. Another optic fiber extends from the last gaming device back to the gateway. A network loop topography is formed. Furthermore, applicant's invention essentially adheres to IEEE's Standard for a High Performance Serial Bus-1394-1995 (Abstract, Figures 1-4, and Paragraphs 18-26).

Regarding claims 1, 13, and 24, Wells discloses "a host controller having "a data terminal" and plural local controllers, each of which has "a data in terminal and a data out terminal", interconnected in a string with "the data out terminal of the host controller being controller being connected to the data in terminal of a first local controller and the data in terminal of each of the other local controllers [or nodes] being connected to the data out terminal of the preceding local controller [or node] in the string." (Figure 2 and paragraphs 35-39, 45-49, and 52).

Regarding claims 13, 24, and 31, Wells seems to lack explicitly disclosing, “connecting the local controllers in series with one another and with a data out terminal of a host controller so that the local controllers cooperate to define an “MxN-bit shift register.” First, “bit shift registers” have been known since the birth of computers. In regards to personal computers, the design and implementation of the first microprocessor (8086) was built on this premise. Furthermore, most all computers today use some type of microprocessor related in some way to the 8086. Second, the arrangement shown in Wells’ figure 2, defines a 4x1-bit shift register with gaming devices (22) being M and gaming gateway (24) being N. It would have been obvious at the time of applicant’s invention to incorporate an MxN-bit shift register because doing so is notoriously well known. One would be motivated to do so in order to verify the validity of data before transferring the data to a controller.

Wells discloses a “data out terminal” and a “data in terminal” as required by the claims since Wells can communicate bi-directionally rather than in a single direction. First, Wells’ bi-directional communication does not preclude applicant’s mode of communication. Second, Wells discloses, “data may flow in one direction along link (28) from the second device to the first device (paragraph 52).

Regarding claim 1, Wells seems to lack explicitly disclosing, “a powerline interconnecting the power terminals of the host controller and all the local controllers; and a common line interconnecting the common terminals of the host controller and all of the local controllers.” However, Wells’ system requires electricity to power the system. One would also agree that the system can be powered via a series circuit. A typical series circuit consisting of 120 Vac requires at least a three-conductor cable consisting of a power leg, neutral line, and a

ground wire. Finally, to complete the circuit, the three-conductor cable must connect to each of the devices. Therefore, it would have been obvious at the time of applicant's invention to power the devices with a typical electrical circuit. Doing so is notoriously well known.

Regarding Claims 1, 13, 24, and 31, Wells seems to lack explicitly disclosing that only one local controller is directly connected to the host controller. Applicant essentially claims the configuration is in an open-loop configuration versus a closed-loop configuration as shown in Wells. However, connecting devices for communication in open-loop configurations are notoriously well known as shown in Warrior et al (U.S. 5,333,114).

Response to Arguments

13. Applicant's arguments, see pages 9-11, filed October 3, 2003, with respect to claims 1-36 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The rejection of claims 1-36 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Wells (U.S. Patent Application Publication U.S. 2002/0115487 A1) has been withdrawn. However, a rejection to claims 1-36 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wells (U.S. Patent Application Publication U.S. 2002/0115487 A1) is applied above.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott E. Jones whose telephone number is (703) 308-7133. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday, 6:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M..


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Teresa Walberg can be reached on (703) 308-1327. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Art Unit: 3713

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148.

Scott E. Jones
Examiner
Art Unit 3713

sej

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott E. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "S".